

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 7013  
By Pleasant

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Otis Mansfield Griffin of Rosemark.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to honor those exemplary citizens who contribute significantly to Tennessee's diverse and dynamic culture; and

WHEREAS, Otis Mansfield Griffin is one such outstanding gentleman whose bountiful life has made his family and his community deservedly proud; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Griffin's invaluable participation in the Rosemark Oral History Project serves to illuminate, with moving clarity, the oftentimes astonishingly difficult lives of early twentieth-century farmers; moreover, his contributions provide an invaluable service to future generations seeking an appreciation of an increasingly distant past; and

WHEREAS, Otis Mansfield Griffin was born on February 2, 1909, in Montgomery County, Mississippi, the third of six children born to Rudolph Philip Griffin and Birdie Shelton Griffin; and

WHEREAS, in describing a self-sufficiency almost inconceivable today, Mr. Griffin said of his childhood on his family's farm, "My Daddy owned his own equipment, mules and plows...We didn't buy anything that we could raise. The only things that we bought was flour, sugar, coffee, and, perhaps, a can of salmon."; and

WHEREAS, Otis Griffin's father passed away when Otis was eleven years old, and for the next eleven years his family struggled, living for most of that period on "Grandpa Shelton's" farm in northern Montgomery County; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Griffin recalls that time with more than a dose of good-natured humor, "People back then, if you was recognized as being lazy, you weren't no good. You got to let

them know you're smart. If you run out of something to do, go out there and dig a hole. When you got it dug, turn around and fill it up. Let them see you. 'He's smart,' they would say. People were judged on how hard working they were."; and

WHEREAS, Otis Griffin first came to Tennessee in 1933 to work in a Civilian Conservation Corps camp in Fayette County planting black locust and loblolly pine trees; Mr. Griffin recalls meeting his future wife, Edna Earle Faulk, there, at a "little country party and I was the music maker...Back then I tried to play the guitar and sing a little."; Otis and Edna were married in 1936; and

WHEREAS, in the summer of 1940, Mr. Griffin accepted work at a new powder plant located west of Millington, Tennessee; in the fall of that year, Mr. and Mrs. Griffin moved to nearby Rosemark, where their three children were born: Otis Faulk Griffin, born on October 7, 1940, Brenda Jo Griffin, born on April 3, 1944, and Barry Griffin, born on July 23, 1953; and

WHEREAS, after the closing of the powder plant at the end of WWII, Mr. Griffin next went to work in the maintenance department at the Navy base in Millington, where he would remain employed until his retirement in 1971; and

WHEREAS, upon his retirement, Otis Griffin pursued his interest in music and in education, and he became the oldest person in Tennessee to receive a high school diploma in the year 2003; and

WHEREAS, Otis Griffin's beloved wife, Edna Earle Faulk Griffin, died on November 4, 1999, only a few months short of the couple's sixty-fourth wedding anniversary; and

WHEREAS, excerpts from Mr. Griffin's enlightening interviews, as recorded for the Rosemark Oral History Project, will be included in a forthcoming book entitled *History of Rosemark*; and

WHEREAS, Otis Griffin exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, throughout his long and remarkable life, Mr. Griffin has demonstrated an extraordinary ability to motivate others to reach their potential, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of his peers and superiors alike; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED  
FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE  
CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Otis Mansfield Griffin for his bountiful life  
of purpose and commitment and extend to him our best wishes for every continued success in  
his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared  
for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.